REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-13 are pending. Claims 3-11 and 13 are amended to correct obvious inadvertent errors in syntax and for consistent punctuation. Entry of the amendments to the claims is in order because the changes raise no issues that would require further consideration and/or search.

Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 1-8 and 10-13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nonoyama et al. (WO 99/50850) in view of Nieuwkerk (U.S. Patent No. 5,905,609) and Bui et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,532,128).

The Office Action concedes that Nonoyama et al., the primary reference, fails to disclose that the block is actually a code word, but relies on Nieuwkerk for this feature, citing column 4, lines 34-42. However, the indicated portion of Nieuwkerk actually states:

> Each block is constituted by a first block section (the header) and a second block section (the body). The first block section of a specific first block, that is block B0 comprises a third codeword cw3, a sync signal (or sync word) 101 and a first codeword cw1, in this order. The first block section of the directly successive block, that is block B1, comprises a fourth codeword cw4, a sync word 104 and a second codeword cw2, in this order. The first codeword cw1 is quad to the fourth codeword cw4.

There is nothing in this portion of Nieuwkerk indicating that if there is a match between a read absolute C1 code word quad and

a target absolute C1 code word quad number, an interrupt signal is generated to interrupt transport of the data storage medium past the read head, as recited in independent claims 1, 4, 7, 8, 10, and 11. Nor is there any disclosure in this portion of Nieuwkerk regarding determining a correspondence between a read absolute C1 code word quad number and a target absolute C1 quad number and, on finding a correspondence, generating an interrupt signal to interrupt transport of the data storage medium past the read head.

These steps enable Applicants' method and device to very accurately and efficiently determine when a signal to interrupt transport should be generated. This concept is missing from the applied references. In the prior art, the longitudinal position is incremented every 7.2 mm. However, by relying on the embedded C1 code word quad numbers, the present invention enables resolution of the longitudinal position with a precision considerably greater than the prior art, e.g., to 1.2 mm. Use of the embedded C1 code word quad numbers for the purpose of locating append points permits very efficient use of the recording medium, because the C1 code word quad numbers are already present on the tape to identify data fields thereon. Consequently, the combination of Nonoyama et al., Nieuwkerk, and Bui et al. does not render Applicants' independent claims obvious.

Dependent claims 2, 3, 5, 6, and 13 are allowable for at least the same reasons advanced for the claims upon which they

depend. In addition, the art of record fails to include important features of these claims. For example, claim 2 requires reading at least one absolute C1 code word quad number. The Office Action never says any of the references, including Nieuwkerk, discloses this feature. Claim 3 includes the step of distinguishing between a first and second written C1 code word pair within the same C1 code word quad, by searching for a synchronization field. The Office Action never says Nieuwkerk or any other applied reference discloses this feature. Claim 5 requires distinguishing between a pair of absolute C1 code word quad numbers read from a pair of C1 code word pairs within a C1 code word quad, and selecting an append point as a first of the C1 code word pairs within the C1 code word quad. The Office Action never says any of the applied references, including Nieuwkerk, discloses these steps. Claim 6 includes the step of distinguishing between a pair of absolute C1 code word quad numbers read from respective first and second C1 code word pairs within a C1 code word quad by examining a data field, a limitation missing from the applied references.

Applicants traverse the rejection of claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nonoyama et al., Nieuwkerk, and Bui et al., and further in view of Sakamoto (U.S. Patent No. 4,390,909). Sakamoto fails to cure at least the above-noted deficiencies of Nonoyama et al, Nieuwkerk, and Bui et al.

Consequently, claim 9 is patentable with claim 8, upon which it depends.

In view of the foregoing, favorable reconsideration and allowance are deemed in order.

To any extent necessary during prosecution of this application, Applicant hereby requests an extension of time not otherwise requested and hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge any required fees not otherwise provided for, including application processing, extension of time, and extra claims fees, to Deposit Account No. 07-1337.

Respectfully submitted,
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